

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Department of Energy recently announced that it will release \$3.2 billion in funds for energy efficiency and conservation projects across the country. Three cities and one county on the Central Coast will combine to receive nearly \$4.7 million from this grant program, which was funded in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

"The Recovery Act is a great investment in our country, and few parts of this legislation illustrate that better than these energy grants," said Congressman Sam Farr (D-Carmel). "These projects will create jobs, save taxpayer dollars and help modernize the way we use energy in our communities."

Cities and counties receiving funds:

- **Monterey County, \$2,527,500**
- **Salinas, \$1,355,100**
- **Santa Cruz City, \$553,800**
- **Watsonville, \$215,100**

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The grant program is intended to fund projects that will help reduce energy use and fossil fuel emissions and improve energy efficiency around the country. The grants support a wide range of programs including energy audits and building retrofits, financial incentive programs for energy efficiency improvements, transportation programs that conserve energy, renewable energy installations on government buildings and more.

"We are pleased that the stimulus made funding available for projects at the local level," said Santa Cruz Mayor Cynthia Mathews. "The Santa Cruz community places a high priority on improving energy efficiency, and we have set high goals for ourselves. These funds will allow the city to undertake a broad range of projects to lower our carbon footprint while also saving taxpayer dollars by reducing operating costs."

Mathews added that local governments like Santa Cruz were among the first to make specific

commitments for climate protection, and the block grant funds will help in meeting their goals.

"The funding will be used for the cheapest, cleanest and most reliable energy technologies we have--energy efficiency and conservation--which can be deployed immediately," said Energy Secretary Steven Chu. "The grants also empower local communities to make strategic investments to meet the nation's long term clean energy and climate goals."

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